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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/651,840 | 08/29/2003 | Richard G. Cartledge | 28099-0006 | 8172 |
| 24633 | 7590 | 01/25/2007 | EXAMINER | |
| HOGAN & HARTSON LLP IP GROUP, COLUMBIA SQUARE 555 THIRTEENTH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20004 | | | POUS, NATALIE R | |
| | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER | |
| | | 3731 | | |
| | | MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE | |
| | | 01/25/2007 | PAPER | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

NPI

**Advisory Action
Before the Filing of an Appeal Brief**

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| 10/651,840 | CARTLEDGE ET AL. | |
| Examiner | Art Unit | |
| Natalie Pous | 3731 | |

--The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

THE REPLY FILED 06 January 2007 FAILS TO PLACE THIS APPLICATION IN CONDITION FOR ALLOWANCE.

1. The reply was filed after a final rejection, but prior to or on the same day as filing a Notice of Appeal. To avoid abandonment of this application, applicant must timely file one of the following replies: (1) an amendment, affidavit, or other evidence, which places the application in condition for allowance; (2) a Notice of Appeal (with appeal fee) in compliance with 37 CFR 41.31; or (3) a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) in compliance with 37 CFR 1.114. The reply must be filed within one of the following time periods:

- a) The period for reply expires _____ months from the mailing date of the final rejection.
 b) The period for reply expires on: (1) the mailing date of this Advisory Action, or (2) the date set forth in the final rejection, whichever is later. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of the final rejection.

Examiner Note: If box 1 is checked, check either box (a) or (b). ONLY CHECK BOX (b) WHEN THE FIRST REPLY WAS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE FINAL REJECTION. See MPEP 706.07(f).

Extensions of time may be obtained under 37 CFR 1.136(a). The date on which the petition under 37 CFR 1.136(a) and the appropriate extension fee have been filed is the date for purposes of determining the period of extension and the corresponding amount of the fee. The appropriate extension fee under 37 CFR 1.17(a) is calculated from: (1) the expiration date of the shortened statutory period for reply originally set in the final Office action; or (2) as set forth in (b) above, if checked. Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of the final rejection, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

NOTICE OF APPEAL

2. The Notice of Appeal was filed on _____. A brief in compliance with 37 CFR 41.37 must be filed within two months of the date of filing the Notice of Appeal (37 CFR 41.37(a)), or any extension thereof (37 CFR 41.37(e)), to avoid dismissal of the appeal. Since a Notice of Appeal has been filed, any reply must be filed within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 41.37(a).

AMENDMENTS

3. The proposed amendment(s) filed after a final rejection, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because
 (a) They raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search (see NOTE below);
 (b) They raise the issue of new matter (see NOTE below);
 (c) They are not deemed to place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or
 (d) They present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

NOTE: _____. (See 37 CFR 1.116 and 41.33(a)).

4. The amendments are not in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121. See attached Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment (PTOL-324).

5. Applicant's reply has overcome the following rejection(s): _____.

6. Newly proposed or amended claim(s) _____ would be allowable if submitted in a separate, timely filed amendment canceling the non-allowable claim(s).

7. For purposes of appeal, the proposed amendment(s): a) will not be entered, or b) will be entered and an explanation of how the new or amended claims would be rejected is provided below or appended.

The status of the claim(s) is (or will be) as follows:

Claim(s) allowed: _____.

Claim(s) objected to: 13, 16-17 and 20-23.

Claim(s) rejected: 1-12, 14, 15, 18, 19 and 24.

Claim(s) withdrawn from consideration: _____.

AFFIDAVIT OR OTHER EVIDENCE

8. The affidavit or other evidence filed after a final action, but before or on the date of filing a Notice of Appeal will not be entered because applicant failed to provide a showing of good and sufficient reasons why the affidavit or other evidence is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 1.116(e).

9. The affidavit or other evidence filed after the date of filing a Notice of Appeal, but prior to the date of filing a brief, will not be entered because the affidavit or other evidence failed to overcome all rejections under appeal and/or appellant fails to provide a showing a good and sufficient reasons why it is necessary and was not earlier presented. See 37 CFR 41.33(d)(1).

10. The affidavit or other evidence is entered. An explanation of the status of the claims after entry is below or attached.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION/OTHER

11. The request for reconsideration has been considered but does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because:
See Continuation Sheet.

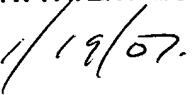
12. Note the attached Information Disclosure Statement(s). (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s). _____

13. Other: _____.

Continuation of 11. does NOT place the application in condition for allowance because: With respect to Spence: applicant argues that Spence fails to teach an adjustable member which is configured to adjust the dimensions of the annular implant. Examiner asserts that claim 1 requires that the adjustment tool actuate the adjustment member. Examiner sustains that the tool 362 of Spence performs this function. Column 11, lines 25-27 states "wire 358 is tensioned to bring balls and sockets together and then lock in place using tool 362. Thus the tool both tensions, ie tightens or changes the dimension of the annular ring, and also locks. Further, applicant argues that the device of Spence is not configured to provide for adjustment before, during and after the anatomic orifice or lumen resumes near normal to normal physiologic function. Examiner asserts that since the device of Spence meets all structural limitations as set forth by the claims, it will inherently perform the same function, and thus would be capable of performing the intended function. Thus, examiner sustains that Spence teaches all limitations of claim 1 as required by 35 USC 102. Since examiner sustains the previous 102 rejections, applicants arguments with respect to the 103 rejections are moot.



ANHTUAN T. NGUYEN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER



1/19/07